

In the Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:
 - creating a first license ~~having~~ comprising a first cardinality ~~associated with the~~
~~license~~, wherein ~~the~~ a cardinality indicates the number of playback devices that can be
authorized for playback of associated digital audio content, the license created by and the
cardinality to be enforced by a license management device;
 - transmitting information corresponding to the first license to a content provider
from the license management device;
 - transmitting the first license to a first set of playback devices from the license
management device, wherein the first set of playback devices is less than or equal to the
first cardinality;
 - storing the first license in the first set of playback devices in response to a
command from the license management device; and
 - determining whether playback of first digital audio content received from the
content provider is authorized by comparing the first license with the first digital audio
content having one or more embedded licenses by the first set of playback devices.
2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising:
 - storing the first license in second digital audio content; and
 - authorizing playback of the second digital audio content with the first set of
playback devices.
3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising:
 - creating a second license having a second cardinality, the license created by the
license management device;
 - transmitting information corresponding to the second license to the content
provider from the license management device;
 - transmitting the second license to a second set of playback devices from the
license management device, wherein the second set of playback devices is determined

based, at least in part, on the second cardinality, and further wherein at least one playback device belongs to the first set and to the second set;

storing the second license in the second set of playback device in response to one or more commands from the license management device; and

determining whether playback of the second digital audio content received from the content provider is authorized by comparing the first license with the digital audio content having one or more embedded licenses by the second set of playback devices.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the cardinality is fixed.
5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the cardinality is variable.
6. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the cardinality is unlimited.
7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein at least one of the first set of playback devices comprises at least one hardware playback device.
8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein at least one of the first set of playback devices comprises at least one software player.
9. (Canceled)
10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the first digital audio content further comprises video digital programming.
11. (Currently Amended) A machine-readable medium having stored thereon sequences of instructions that when executed one or more electronic systems to:
create a first license ~~having comprising~~ comprising a first cardinality ~~associated with the license~~, wherein ~~the~~ a cardinality indicates the number of playback devices that can be authorized for playback of associated digital audio content, the license created by and the cardinality to be enforced by a license management device;

transmit information corresponding to the first license to a content provider from the license management device;

transmit the first license to a first set of playback devices from the license management device, wherein the first set of playback devices is less than or equal to the first cardinality;

store the first license in the first set of playback devices in response to a command from the license management device; and

determine whether playback of first digital audio content received from the content provider is authorized by comparing the first license with the first digital audio content having one or more embedded licenses by the first set of playback devices.

12. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 11 further comprising sequences of instructions that when executed cause the one or more electronic systems to:

store the first license in second digital audio content; and

authorize playback of the second digital audio content with the first set of playback devices.

13. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 11 further comprising sequences of instructions that when executed cause the one or more electronic systems to:

create a second license having a second cardinality, the license created by the license management device;

transmit information corresponding to the second license to the content provider from the license management device;

transmit the second license to a second set of playback devices from the license management device, wherein the second set of playback devices is determined based, at least in part, on the second cardinality, and further wherein at least one playback device belongs to the first set and to the second set;

store the second license in the second set of playback device in response to one or more commands from the license management device; and

determine whether playback of the second digital audio content received from the content provider is authorized by comparing the first license with the digital audio content having one or more embedded licenses by the second set of playback devices.

14. (Original) The machine-readable medium of claim 11 wherein the cardinality is fixed.

15. (Original) The machine-readable medium of claim 11 wherein the cardinality is variable.

16. (Original) The machine-readable medium of claim 11 wherein the cardinality is unlimited.

17. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 11 wherein at least one of the first set of playback devices comprises at least one hardware playback device.

18. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 11 wherein at least one of the first set of playback devices comprises at least one software player.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable medium of claim 11 wherein the first digital audio content further comprises digital video programming.

21. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for digital license management, the apparatus comprising:

means for creating a first license ~~having~~ comprising a first cardinality ~~associated with the license~~, wherein ~~the~~ a cardinality indicates the number of playback devices that can be authorized for playback of associated digital audio content, the license created by and the cardinality to be enforced by a license management device;

means for transmitting information corresponding to the first license to a content provider from the license management device;

means for transmitting the first license to a first set of playback devices from the license management device, wherein the first set of playback devices is less than or equal to the first cardinality;

means for storing the first license in the first set of playback devices in response to a command from the license management device; and

means for determining whether playback of first digital audio content received from the content provider is authorized by comparing the first license with the first digital audio content having one or more embedded licenses by the first set of playback devices.

22. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 21 further comprising:

means for storing the first license in second digital audio content; and

means for authorizing playback of the second digital audio content with the first set of playback devices.

23. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 21 further comprising:

means for creating a second license having a second cardinality, the license created by the license management device;

means for transmitting information corresponding to the second license to the content provider from the license management device;

means for transmitting the second license to a second set of playback devices from the license management device, wherein the second set of playback devices is determined based, at least in part, on the second cardinality, and further wherein at least one playback device belongs to the first set and to the second set;

means for storing the second license in the second set of playback device in response to one or more commands from the license management device; and

means for determining whether playback of the second digital audio content received from the content provider is authorized by comparing the first license with the digital audio content having one or more embedded licenses by the second set of playback devices.

24. (Currently Amended) A digital data signal embodied in a data communications medium shared among a plurality of network devices having a processor, the digital data signal comprising instructions that, when executed, cause the processor to provide digital audio programming, the digital data signal comprising license ~~having an associated~~ comprising a first cardinality, wherein ~~the~~ a cardinality indicates the number of playback devices that can be authorized for playback of associated digital audio content, the license having been created by and the cardinality to be enforced by a license management device, wherein a set of playback devices receive the digital data signal in response to one or more commands issued by the license management device and authorize playback of digital audio data if the license included in the computer data signal matches at least one license stored in the digital audio data.

25. (Original) The digital data signal of claim 24 wherein the cardinality is fixed.

26. (Original) The digital data signal of claim 24 wherein the cardinality is variable.

27. (Original) The digital data signal of claim 24 wherein the cardinality is unlimited.

28. (Original) The digital data signal of claim 24 wherein at least one of the first set of playback devices is a hardware playback device.

29. (Original) The digital data signal of claim 24 wherein at least one of the first set of playback devices is a software player.

30. (Original) The digital data signal of claim 24 wherein the first digital audio content further comprises digital video programming.

31. (New) A method comprising:
receiving a first license at a playback device, the playback device belonging to a first set of playback devices, the license comprising a first cardinality, wherein a

cardinality indicating a number of playback devices that can be authorized for playback of digital content, and wherein the first set of playback devices is less than or equal to the first cardinality;

storing the first license in the playback device;

receiving first digital content, wherein information associated with the first license is embedded in the first digital content; and

determining whether playback of the received first digital content by the playback device is authorized by comparing the first license stored in the playback device with the first license information embedded in the first digital content.

32. (New) The method of claim 31 further comprising:

receiving second digital content, wherein information associated with the first license is embedded in the second digital content; and

authorizing playback of the second digital audio content by the first playback device based on a match between the first license and the first license information embedded in the second digital content.

33. (New) The method of claim 31 further comprising:

receiving a second license at the playback device, the license having a second cardinality, the playback device belonging to a second set of playback devices, wherein the second set of playback devices is determined based, at least in part, on the second cardinality;

storing the second license in the playback device;

receiving second digital content, wherein information associated with the second license is embedded in the second digital content; and

determining whether playback of the received second digital audio content by the playback device is authorized by comparing the second license with the second license information embedded in the second digital content.

34. (New) A method comprising:

creating a first license having a first cardinality associated with the license, wherein a cardinality indicates the number of playback devices that can be authorized for playback of associated digital content;

transmitting information corresponding to the first license to a content provider, a first digital content at the content provider to be embedded with the first license information;

transmitting the first license to a first set of playback devices, wherein the first set of playback devices is less than or equal to the first cardinality, the first set of playback devices to render first digital content provided by the content provider based on a match between the first license and the first license information embedded in the first digital content.

35. (New) The method of claim 24 further comprising:
embedding the first license in the first digital audio content-

36. (New) The method of claim 24 further comprising:
creating a second license having a second cardinality;
transmitting information corresponding to the second license to the content provider, a second digital content at the content provider to be embedded with the second license information;

transmitting the second license to a second set of playback devices, wherein the second set of playback devices is determined based, at least in part, on the second cardinality, and further wherein at least one playback device belongs to the first set and to the second set, the second set of playback devices to render second digital audio content provided by the content provider based on a match between the second license and the second license information embedded in the second digital content.